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RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 1101  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1870  
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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0209  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 1188  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 000266

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR RW

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KAGAME CONTINUES TO CASTIGATE THE WEST  
ON INDICTMENTS

REF: KIGALI 246

Classified By: CDA Cheryl L. Sim, reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (U) At April 7 genocide commemoration ceremonies at Nymata in eastern Rwanda (scene of extensive massacres in the 1994 genocide), President Paul Kagame (speaking consecutively in English and Kinyarwanda so "there could be no misinterpretation" of his comments) continued his harsh criticism of "certain elements in the West" who "claim authority over human rights." While particularly critical of the French and Spanish judges who issued indictments of senior Rwandan officials and military officers, wondering why these judges did not investigate the slave trade and colonialism and their governments' role in the 1994 genocide, he also criticized "a wider context of arrogance" among some Westerners with regard to human rights. Kagame asserted that his own and his military officers' human rights records were better than those of many western leaders, noting the RPA had fought and defeated a murderous regime in defense of those rights. He added those who fought were not the kind of people who will be "put down by this nonsense and trampled on." He called upon his "fellow Africans" to unite in an effort to fight for "our dignity." However, he also said that the "best way" to fight those opposed to Rwanda and protect Rwanda's dignity was to "work hard to overcome the past and build the future." He concluded by exhorting those present to look Rwanda's critics in the eye and tell them to "mind their own business and go to hell."

¶2. (C) President Kagame also made reference in his remarks to an incident several years ago, in which certain donors urged his government not to intervene in the Congo, allegedly threatening to withdraw development funds. Kagame recounted that a minister from one specific government telephoned him to warn him it would cut its direct budgetary support if his troops entered the Congo. He asserted he told the minister that the minister could "take his money," as Kagame "needed my people alive - did they want to give money to people who had died?" Then, said the President, he hung up the phone. British Ambassador Nicholas Cannon told Charge on April 8 that Kagame had been referring to an exchange with a senior British official, and Kagame had exaggerated what had transpired, noting that the impact of Rwandan intervention in the Congo on UK assistance levels had not been conducted by telephone.

¶3. (C) On April 8, in a meeting between Senior AF Advisor

Timothy Shortley and Envoy of the Great Lakes Ambassador Richard Sezibera (Charge also attended), Sezibera also raised the Spanish indictments and the GOR's unhappiness that one of the indicted RDF generals had been unable to attend a conference in the U.S. Sezibera maintained that Rwanda's political opponents were consciously using western nations' legal systems to both "tie up" the Rwandan government, and to achieve revisionist goals regarding the established history of the genocide. "Please have a global policy on the indictments," said Sezibera, urging recognition of the political nature of those judges' actions. Sezibera also stated that President Kagame would take the matter up within the African Union and other appropriate international fora. Shortley responded that the USG had legal processes in place that had to be used to examine the impact of those indictments on such matters as the travel of senior Rwandans to the U.S., a legal reality that did not signal respect for or acceptance of the indictments.

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